

by the Greeks and Romans with a jealous eye, whence the Greek proverb "Have the Frank for your friend, but not for your neighbor."

17. This King, who showed himself so great in extending his empire and subduing foreign nations, and was constantly occupied with plans to that end, undertook also very many works calculated to adorn and benefit his kingdom, and brought several of them to completion. Among these, the most deserving of mention are the basilica of the Holy Mother of God at Aix-la-Chapelle, built in the most admirable manner, and a bridge over the Rhine at Mayence, half a mile long, the breadth of the river at this point. This bridge was destroyed by fire the year before Charles died, but, owing to his death so soon after, could not be repaired, although he had intended to rebuild it in stone. He began two palaces of beautiful workmanship—one near his manor called Ingelheim, not far from Mayence; the other at Nimeguen, on the Waal, the stream that washes the south side of the island of the Batavians. But, above all, sacred edifices were the object of his care throughout his whole kingdom, and whenever he found them falling to ruin from age, he commanded the priests and fathers who had charge of them to repair them, and made sure by commissioners that his instructions were obeyed. He also fitted out a fleet for the war with the Northmen; the vessels required for this purpose were built on the rivers that flow from Gaul and Germany into the Northern Ocean. Moreover, since the Northmen continually overran and laid waste the Gallic and German coasts, he caused watch and ward to be kept in all the harbors, and at the mouths of rivers in all the harbors, and at the mouths of rivers large enough to admit the entrance of vessels, to prevent the enemy from disembarking; and in the South, in Narbonensis and Septimania, and along the whole coast of Italy as far as Rome, he took the same precautions against the Moors, who had recently begun their piratical practices. Hence, Italy suffered no great harm in his time at the hands of the Moors, nor Gaul and Germany from the Northmen, save that the Moors got possession of the Etruscan town of Civita Vecchia by treachery, and sacked it, and the Northmen har-

ried some of the islands in Frisia off the German coast.

18. Thus did Charles defend and increase as well as beautify his kingdom, as is well known; and here let me express my admiration of his great qualities and his extraordinary constancy alike in good and evil fortune. I will now forthwith proceed to give the details of his private and family life.

After his father's death, while sharing the kingdom with his brother, he bore his unfriendliness and jealousy most patiently, and, to the wonder of all, could not be provoked to be angry with him. Later he married a daughter of Desiderius, King of the Lombards, at the instance of his mother; but he repudiated her at the end of a year for some reason unknown, and married Hildegard, a woman of high birth, of Suabian origin. He had three sons by her—Charles, Pepin, and Louis—and as many daughters—Hruodrud, Bertha, and Gisela. He had three other daughters besides these—Theoderada, Hiltrud, and Ruodhaid—two by his third wife, Fastrada, a woman of East Frankish (that is to say, German) origin, and the third by a concubine, whose name for the moment escapes me. At the death of Fastrada, he married Liutgard, an Alemannic woman, who bore him no children. After her death he had three concubines—Gersuinda, a Saxon, by whom he had Adaltrud, Regina, who was the mother of Drogo and Hugh; and Ethelind, by whom he had Theodoric. Charles' mother, Berthrada, passed her old age with him in great honor; he entertained the greatest veneration for her; and there was never any disagreement between them except when he divorced the daughter of King Desiderius, whom he had married to please her. She died soon after Hildegard, after living to see three grandsons and as many granddaughters in her son's house, and he buried her with great pomp in the Basilica of St. Denis, where his father lay. He had an only sister, Gisela, who had consecrated herself to a religious life from girlhood, and he cherished as much affection for her as for his mother. She also died a few years before him in the nunnery where she had passed her life.

19. The plan that he adopted for his children's

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education was, first of all, to have both boys and
 girls instructed in the liberal arts, to which he
 also turned his own attention. As soon as their
 years admitted, in accordance with the customs
 of the Franks, the boys had to learn horseman-
 ship, and to practice war and the chase, and the
 girls to familiarize themselves with cloth-mak-
 ing, and to handle distaff and spindle, that they
 might not grow indolent through idleness, and
 he fostered in them every virtuous sentiment. He
 only lost three of all his children before his death,
 two sons and one daughter, Charles who was the
 eldest, Pepin, whom he had made King of Italy,
 and Hruodrud, his oldest daughter, whom he
 had betrothed to Constantine, Emperor of the
 Greeks. Pepin left one son, named Bernard, and
 five daughters, Adelaide, Atula, Guntrada,
 Berthaid, and Theoderada. The King gave a strik-
 ing proof of his fatherly affection at the time of
 Pepin's death: he appointed the grandson to suc-
 ceed Pepin, and had the granddaughters brought
 up with his own daughters. When his sons and
 his daughter died, he was not so calm as might
 have been expected from his remarkably strong
 mind, for his affections were no less strong, and
 moved him to tears. Again, when he was told of
 the death of Hadrian, the Roman Pontiff, whom
 he had loved most of all his friends, he wept as
 much as if he had lost a brother, or a very dear
 son. He was by nature most ready to contract
 friendships, and not only made friends easily, but
 clung to them persistently, and cherished most
 fondly those with whom he had formed such ties.
 He was so careful of the training of his sons and
 daughters that he never took his meals without
 them when he was at home, and never made a
 journey without them; his sons would ride at his
 side, and his daughters follow him, while a num-
 ber of his bodyguard, detailed for their protec-
 tion, brought up the rear. Strange to say, although
 they were very handsome women, and he loved
 them very dearly, he was never willing to marry
 any of them to a man of their own nation or to a
 foreigner, but kept them all at home until his
 death, saying that he could not dispense with
 their society. Hence, though otherwise happy, he
 felt the malignity of fortune as far as
 his domestic concerns were concerned; yet he concealed his knowl-
 edge of the rumors current in regard to them, and

of the suspicions entertained of their honor.

20. By one of his concubines he had a son,
 handsome in face, but hunchbacked, named
 Pepin, whom I omitted to mention in the list of
 his children. When Charles was at war with the
 Huns, and was wintering in Bavaria, this Pepin
 shammed sickness, and plotted against his father
 in company with some of the leading Franks,
 who seduced him with vain promises of the royal
 authority. When his deceit was discovered, and
 the conspirators punished, his head was shaved,
 and he was suffered, in accordance with his wish-
 es, to devote himself to a religious life in the
 monastery of Prüm. A formidable conspiracy
 against Charles had previously been set on foot
 in Germany, but all the traitors were banished,
 some of them without mutilations, others after
 their eyes had been put out. Three of them only
 lost their lives; they drew their swords and resist-
 ed arrest, and, after killing several men, were cut
 down, because they could not otherwise be over-
 powered. It is supposed that the cruelty of Queen
 Fastrada was the primary cause of these plots,
 and they were both due to Charles' apparent
 acquiescence in his wife's cruel conduct, and
 deviation from the usual kindness and gentleness
 of his disposition. All the rest of his life he was
 regarded by everyone with the utmost love and
 affection, so much so that not the least accusation
 of unjust rigor was ever made against him.

21. He liked foreigners, and was at great pains
 to take them under his protection. There were
 often so many of them, both in the palace and the
 kingdom, that they might reasonably have been
 considered a nuisance; but he, with his broad
 humanity, was very little disturbed by such
 annoyances, because he felt himself compensated
 for these great inconveniences by the praises of
 his generosity and the reward of high renown.

22. Charles was large and strong, and of lofty
 stature, though not disproportionately tall (his
 height is well known to have been seven times
 the length of his foot); the upper part of his head
 was round, his eyes very large and animated,
 nose a little long, hair fair, and face laughing and
 merry. Thus his appearance was always stately

just

and dignified, whether he was standing or sitting; although his neck was thick and somewhat short, and his belly rather prominent; but the symmetry of the rest of his body concealed these defects. His gait was firm, his whole carriage manly, and his voice clear, but not so strong as his size led one to expect. His health was excellent, except during the four years preceding his death, when he was subject to frequent fevers; at the last he even limped a little with one foot. Even in those years he consulted rather his own inclinations than the advice of physicians, who were almost hateful to him, because they wanted him to give up roasts, to which he was accustomed, and to eat boiled meat instead. In accordance with the national custom, he took frequent exercise on horseback and in the chase, accomplishments in which scarcely any peoples in the world can equal the Franks. He enjoyed the exhalations from natural warm springs, and often practiced swimming, in which he was such an adept that none could surpass him; and hence it was that he built his palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, and lived there constantly during his latter years until his death. He used not only to invite his sons to his bath, but his nobles and friends, and now and then a troop of his retinue or bodyguard, so that a hundred or more persons sometimes bathed with him.

23. He used to wear the national, that is to say, the Frank, dress—next his skin a linen shirt and linen breeches, and above these a tunic fringed with silk; while hose fastened by bands covered his lower limbs, and shoes his feet, and he protected his shoulders and chest in winter by a close-fitting coat of otter or marten skins. Over all he flung a blue cloak, and he always had a sword girt about him, usually one with a gold or silver hilt and belt; he sometimes carried a jeweled sword, but only on great feasts or at the reception of ambassadors from foreign nations. He despised foreign costumes, however handsome, and never allowed himself to be robed in them, except twice in Rome, when he donned the Roman tunic, chlamys, and shoes; the first time at the request of Pope Hadrian, the second to gratify Leo, Hadrian's successor. On great feasts he made use of embroidered clothes and shoes

bedecked by a golden buckle, and he appeared crowned with a diadem of gold and gems, but on other days his dress varied from the common dress of the people.

monastic ideal
24. Charles was temperate in eating, and particularly so in drinking, for he abominated drunkenness in anybody, much more in himself and those of his household; but he could not easily abstain from food, and often complained that fasts injured his health. He very rarely gave entertainments, only on great feasts, and then to large numbers of people. His meals ordinarily consisted of four courses, not counting the roast, which his huntsmen used to bring in on the spit; he was more fond of this than any other dish. While at table, he listened to reading or music. The subjects of the readings were the stories and deeds of olden time: he was fond, too, of St. Augustine's books, and especially of the one entitled "The City of God." He was so moderate in the use of wine and all sorts of drink that he rarely allowed himself more than three cups in the course of a meal. In summer, after the midday meal, he would eat some fruit, drain a single cup, put off his clothes and shoes, just as he did for the night, and rest for two or three hours. He was in the habit of awaking and rising from bed four or five times during the night. While he was dressing and putting on his shoes, he not only gave audience to his friends, but if the Count of the Palace told him of any suit in which his judgment was necessary, he had the parties brought before him forthwith, took cognizance of the case, and gave his decision, just as if he were sitting on the judgement seat. This was not the only business that he transacted at this time, but he performed any duty of the day whatever, whether he had to attend to the matter himself, or to give commands concerning it to his officers.

25. Charles had the gift of ready and fluent speech, and could express whatever he had to say with the utmost clearness. He was not satisfied with command of his native language merely, but gave attention to the study of foreign ones, and in particular was such a master of Latin that he could speak it as well as his native tongue; but he could understand Greek better than he could

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speak it. He was so eloquent, indeed, that he might have passed for a teacher of eloquence. He most zealously cultivated the liberal arts, held those who taught them in great esteem, and conferred great honors upon them. He took lessons in grammar of the deacon Peter of Pisa, at that time an aged man. Another deacon, Albin of Britain, surnamed Alcuin, a man of Saxon extraction, who was the greatest scholar of the day, was his teacher in other branches of learning. The King spent much time and labor with him studying rhetoric, dialectics, and especially astronomy; he learned to reckon, and used to investigate the motions of the heavenly bodies most curiously, with an intelligent scrutiny. He also tried to write, and used to keep tablets and blanks in bed under his pillow, that at leisure hours he might accustom his hand to form the letters; however, as he did not begin his efforts in due season, but late in life, they met with ill success.

26. He cherished with the greatest fervor and devotion the principles of the Christian religion, which had been instilled into him from infancy. Hence it was that he built the beautiful basilica at Aix-la-Chapelle, which he adorned with gold and silver and lamps, and with rails and doors of solid brass. He had the columns and marbles for this structure brought from Rome and Ravenna, for he could not find such as were suitable elsewhere. He was a constant worshipper at this church as long as his health permitted, going morning and evening, even after nightfall, besides attending mass; and he took care that all the services there conducted should be administered with the utmost possible propriety, very often warning the sextons not to let any improper or unclean thing be brought into the building or remain in it. He provided it with a great number of sacred vessels of gold and silver and with such a quantity of clerical robes that not even the doorkeepers who fill the humblest office in the church were obliged to wear their everyday clothes when in the exercise of their duties. He was at great pains to improve the church reading and psalmody, for he was well skilled in both, although he neither read in public nor sang, except in a low tone and with others.

27. He was very forward in succoring the poor, and in that gratuitous generosity which the Greeks call alms, so much so that he not only made a point of giving in his own country and his own kingdom, but when he discovered that there were Christians living in poverty in Syria, Egypt, and Africa, at Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Carthage, he had compassion on their wants, and used to send money over the seas to them. The reason that he zealously strove to make friends with the kings beyond the seas was that he might get help and relief to the Christians living under their rule. He cherished the Church of St. Peter the Apostle at Rome above all other holy and sacred places, and heaped its treasury with a vast wealth of gold, silver, and precious stones. He sent great and countless gifts to the popes, and throughout his whole reign the wish that he had nearest at heart was to re-establish the ancient authority of the city of Rome under his care and by his influence, and to defend and protect the Church of St. Peter, and to beautify and enrich it out of his own store above all other churches. Although he held it in such veneration, he only repaired to Rome to pay his vows and make his supplications four times during the whole forty-seven years that he reigned.

Imperial coronation

28. When he made his last journey thither, he had also other ends in view. The Romans had inflicted many injuries upon the Pontiff Leo, tearing out his eyes and cutting out his tongue, so that he had been compelled to call upon the King for help. Charles accordingly went to Rome, to set in order the affairs of the Church, which were in great confusion, and passed the whole winter there. It was then that he received the titles of Emperor and Augustus, to which he at first had such an aversion that he declared that he would not have set foot in the Church the day that they conferred, although it was a great feast-day, if he could have foreseen the design of the Pope. He bore very patiently with the jealousy which the Roman emperors showed upon his assuming these titles, for they took this step very ill; and by dint of frequent embassies and letters, in which he addressed them as brothers, he made their haughtiness yield to his magnanimity, a quality in which he was unquestionably much their superior.

rec'd by Pope

Emperor Augustus

29: It was after he received the imperial name that, finding the laws of his people very defective (the Franks have two sets of laws, very different in many particulars), he determined to add what was wanting, to reconcile the discrepancies, and to correct what was vicious and wrongly cited in them. However, he went no further in this matter than to supplement the laws with a few capitularies, and those imperfect ones; but he caused the unwritten laws of all the tribes that came under his rule to be compiled and reduced to writing. He also had the old rude songs that celebrate the deeds and wars of the ancient kings written out for transmission to posterity. He began a grammar of his native language. He gave the months names in his own tongue, in place of the Latin and barbarous names by which they were formerly known among the Franks. He likewise designated the winds by twelve appropriate names; there were hardly more than four distinctive ones in use before. He called January, Wintarmanoth; February, Hornung; March, Lentzimanoth; April, Ostarmanoth; May, Winnemanoth; June, Brachmanoth; July, Heuvimanoth; August, Aranmanoth; September, Witumanoth; October, Windumemanoth; November, Herbstmanoth; December, Heilagmanoth. He styled the winds as follows; Subsolanus, Ostroniwint; Eurus, Ostsundroni; Euroauster, Sundostroni; Auster, Sundroni; Austro-Africus, Sundwestroni; Africus, West-sundroni; Zephyrus, Westroni; Caurus, Westnordroni; Circius, Nordwestroni; Septentrio, Nordroni; Aquilo, Nordostroni; Vulturnus, Ostnordroni.

Volona. Louis the Pious
30. Toward the close of his life, when he was broken by ill-health and old age, he summoned Louis, King of Aquitania, his only surviving son by Hildegard, and gathered together all the chief men of the whole kingdom of the Franks in a solemn assembly. He appointed Louis, with their unanimous consent, to rule with himself over the whole kingdom, and constituted him heir to the imperial name, placing the diadem upon his son's head, he bade him be proclaimed Emperor and Augustus. This step was hailed by all present with great favor, for it really seemed as if God had prompted him to it for the kingdom's good; it increased the King's dignity, and struck no lit-

tle terror into foreign nations. After sending his son back to Aquitania, although weak from age he set out to hunt, as usual, near his palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, and passed the rest of the autumn in the chase, returning thither about the first of November. While wintering there, he was seized, in the month of January, with a high fever, and took to his bed. As soon as he was taken sick, he prescribed for himself abstinence from food, as he always used to do in case of fever, thinking that the disease could be driven off, or at least mitigated, by fasting. Besides the fever, he suffered from a pain in the side, which the Greeks called pleurisy; but he still persisted in fasting, and in keeping up his strength only by draughts taken at very long intervals. He died January ~~twenty-eighth~~, the seventh day from the time he took to his bed, at nine o'clock in the morning, after partaking of the holy communion, the seventy-second year of his age and the forty-seventh of his reign.

31. His body was washed and cared for in the usual manner, and was then carried to the church, and interred amid the greatest lamentations of all the people. There was some question at first where to lay him, because in his lifetime he had given no directions as to his burial; but at length all agreed that he could nowhere be more honorably entombed than in the very basilica that he had built in the town at his own expense, for the love of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and in honor of the Holy and Eternal Virgin, his Mother. He was buried there the same day that he died, and a gilded arch was erected above his tomb with his image and an inscription. The words of the inscription were as follows: "In this tomb lies the body of Charles, the Great and Orthodox Emperor, who gloriously extended the kingdom of the Franks, and reigned prosperously for forty-seven years. He died at the age of seventy, in the year of our Lord 814, the 7th Indiction, on the 28th day of January."

32. Very many omens had portended his approaching end, a fact that he had recognized as well as others. Eclipses both of the sun and moon were very frequent during the last three years of his life, and a black spot was visible on the sun

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for the space of seven days. The gallery between
the basilica and the palace, which he had built at
great pains and labor, fell in sudden ruin to the
ground on the day of the Ascension of our Lord.
The wooden bridge over the Rhine at Mayence,
which he had caused to be constructed with
admirable skill, at the cost of ten years' hard
work, so that it seemed as if it might last forever,
was so completely consumed in three hours by
an accidental fire that not a single splinter of it
was left, except what was under water. Moreover,
one day in his last campaign into Saxony against
Godfred, King of the Danes, Charles himself saw
a ball of fire fall suddenly from the heavens with
a great light, just as he was leaving camp before
sunrise to set out on the march. It rushed across
the clear sky from right to left, and everybody
was wondering what was the meaning of the
sign, when the horse which he was riding gave a
sudden plunge, head foremost, and fell, and
threw him to the ground so heavily that his cloak
buckle was broken and his sword belt shattered;
and after his servants had hastened to him and
relieved him of his arms, he could not rise with-
out their assistance. He happened to have a
javelin in his hand when he was thrown, and this
was struck from his grasp with such force that it
was found lying at a distance of twenty feet or
more from the spot. Again, the palace at Aix-la-
Chapelle frequently trembled, the roofs of what-
ever buildings he tarried in kept up a continual
crackling noise, the basilica in which he was
afterwards buried was struck by lightning, and
the gilded ball that adorned the pinnacle of the
roof was shattered by the thunderbolt and hurled
upon the bishop's house adjoining. In this same
basilica, on the margin of the cornice that ran
around the interior, between the upper and lower
tiers or arches, a legend was inscribed in red let-
ters, stating who was the builder of the temple,
the last words of which were *Karolus Princeps*.
The year that he died it was remarked by some, a
few months before his decease, that the letters of
the word *Princeps* were so effaced as to be no
longer decipherable. But Charles despised, or
affected to despise, all these omens, as having no
reference whatever to him.

It had been his intention to make a will, that

he might give some share in the inheritance to his
daughters and the children of his concubines; but
it was begun too late and could not be finished.
Three years before his death, however, he made a
division of his treasures, money, clothes, and
other movable goods in the presence of his
friends and servants, and called them to witness
it, that their voices might insure the ratification of
the disposition thus made. He had a summary
drawn up of his wishes regarding this distribu-
tion of his property, the terms and text of which
are as follows:

"In the name of the Lord God, the Almighty
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This is the inven-
tory and division dictated by the most glorious
and most pious Lord Charles, Emperor August-
tus, in the 811th year of the Incarnation of our
Lord Jesus Christ, in the 43rd year of his reign
in France and 37th in Italy, the 11th of his
empire, and the 4th Indiction, which consider-
ations of piety and prudence have determined
him, and the favor of God enabled him, to
make of his treasures and money ascertained
this day to be in his treasure chamber. In this
division he is especially desirous to provide
not only that the largess of alms which Chris-
tians usually make of their possessions shall be
made for himself in due course and order out
of his wealth, but also that his heirs shall be
free from all doubt, and know clearly what
belongs to them, and be able to share their
property by suitable partition without litigation
or strife. With this intention and to this
end he first divided all his substance and mov-
able goods ascertained to be in his treasure
chamber on the day aforesaid in gold, silver,
precious stones, and royal ornaments into
three lots, and has subdivided and set off two
of the said lots into twenty-one parts, keeping
the third entire. The first two lots have been
thus subdivided into twenty-one parts because
there are in his kingdom twenty-one recog-
nized metropolitan cities, and in order that
each archbishopric may receive by way of
alms, at the hands of his heirs and friends, one
of the said parts, and that the archbishop who
shall then administer its affairs shall take the
part given to it, and share the same with his

his wealth